DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 314 289 SO 019 135

AUTHOR Blume, George T.
TITLE The Constitution: Little Short of Miracle. A One Act Drama. High School Version, for Presentation at the High School and Middle School Level.
INSTITUTION American Legion, Indianapolis, IN.
PUB DATE Jan 87
NOTE 80p.; For related document, see SO 019 134. The three pages of photographs will not reproduce.
AVAILABLE FROM American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206 (free).
PUB TYPE Creative Works (Literature,Drama,Fine Arts) (030) -- Historical Materials (060)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Acting; Class Activities; *Constitutional History; Curriculum Enrichment; *Dramatic Play; Enrichment Activities; Learning Activities; Middle Schools; Scripts; Secondary Education; *Secondary School Curriculum; United States History
IDENTIFIERS *Bicentennial; *United States Constitution

ABSTRACT

This 30 to 40 minute drama for secondary school students takes place in the Pennsylvania State House, Philadelphia, on September 17, 1787, the day the Constitutional Convention ended. James Madison serves as the drama's spokesman. The drama focuses on five major points: (1) the Colonial Confederation's situation at that time, which necessitated calling for such a convention; (2) three separate constitutional plans that were presented; (3) the importance to the overall continuation of the convention of the Connecticut Compromise; (4) the refusal to sign the Constitution of three important delegates, and their reasons; and (5) the actual signing of the document and adjournment. The wording throughout the drama uses as much of the original recorded text as possible; however, changes were made in order to make it more understandable for school audiences. The number of characters and staging is left to the discretion of those in charge of the drama's production. While there are 16 speaking parts, this number could be expanded if desired. All staging takes place in one room. To assist those selected to act out the part of a designated convention delegate, a short sketch of the 16 delegates who have speaking parts is included. (JB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED314289

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
GEORGE BLUME
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 019135

Cover Photo: Independence National
Historical Park Collection

THE CONSTITUTION: LITTLE SHORT OF MIRACLE

A ONE ACT DRAMA

By George T. Blume
Extension Specialist
CES Virginia Polytechnic Institute & S.U.
and
consultant to

THE AMERICAN LEGION
NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE
UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

For presentation at
The High School and Middle School Level

About the One-Act Historical Drama "The Constitution: Little Short of Miracle"

This 30-40 minute drama takes place in the Pennsylvania State House, Philadelphia, on September 17, 1787, the day the Convention ended with the signing of the Constitution by 39 of the 42 delegates present, representing all states with the exception of Rhode Island who failed to send any delegates.

James Madison serves as the drama's spokesman, and carries the audience back to the beginning of the Convention, then proceeds to bring the audience up-to-date on what has happened during the time frame from May 25 to September 17, 1787.

The drama focuses on five major convention events. First, by making the audience aware of the Colonial Confederation's situation at that time which necessitated a calling for such a convention. Secondly, the introduction and knowledge of the three separate constitutional plans of Randolph (Virginia Plan), Paterson (New Jersey Plan) and Alexander Hamilton's Plan. Thirdly, the importance to the overall continuation of the convention because of the Connecticut Compromise, which called for representing both states and people in the Congressional legislative bodies. Fourthly, the refusal to sign the Constitution by three important delegates: Gerry of Massachusetts, and Mason and Randolph of Virginia, and their reasons for refusal. Fifthly, the actual signing of the engrossed document and adjournment *Sine Die*.

The wording throughout the drama uses as much of the original recorded text as possible, however changes were made in order to make it more understandable for school audiences.

Major references used were:

Scott, E.H. ed. **Journal of the Federal Convention as Kept by James Madison.**

Elliot, Jonathan ed. **The Delegates of the State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution as Recommended by the General Convention at Philadelphia in 1787,** 5 volumes.

Farrand, Max. **The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787,** 4 volumes.

While most speaking parts came directly from the above references, in some places to explain or add a bit of humor or excitement, some "assumed conversations" were added. This in no way detracts from the actual thought processes or historical significance. The presentation of the South Carolina gavel, which was never used by Washington and never really happened only illustrates the respect the delegates had for the General. Also, some of Washington's remarks, as well as some of Wilson's and Martin's, came either from letters, or from speeches given in defense for or against ratification of the Constitution during debates at their respective State Legislatures. These conversations, however, could have taken place informally or in committee during the convention. One other example, Franklin's remarks towards the end of the drama on why he supported the Constitution and hoped that all others would, were actually handed to Wilson to read, rather than spoken by the 82-year-old sage himself.

The number of characters and staging is left to the discretion of those in charge of its production. While there are 16 speaking parts, this number could be expanded if so desired, thus giving others an opportunity for a small part.

A few of the Convention delegates given speaking parts were not necessarily the most important ones contributing to the success of the convention. Gouverneur Morris, for example, was a very important contributor. However, since he had a wooden peg leg, he was excluded as one of the speaking delegates for this reason. Robert Morris, who had little or nothing to say, is given a few lines, since he was very rich and had nominated Washington to be president of the Convention.

To assist those selected to act out a designated delegate, a short sketch of the 16 delegates with speaking parts is included. Needless to say, the actors should be clothed in the dress of the period.

All staging takes place in one room depicted by a number of artists and is included along with the text. How a director may want to arrange the room will, of course, depend upon the size of the stage. One doorway will be needed. A director may want to add other delegates on the stage to act as signers according to the size of the stage. The suggested spotlighting appears essential to obtain the greatest dramatic effects. Washington's chair is quite famous, and any chair used should have placed on it a rising sun as shown in the illustration. No more than two desks are needed, one for Washington, and the other used by the Secretary, Major Jackson. These, however, should be separated, and Washington's placed on a small dais.

Depending on the total allotted time which will vary somewhat in accord with changes a director may have to make, a well informed person, could be invited to impress upon the school audience the significance of what these 55 men accomplished at Philadelphia. Moreover, to have them think in terms of its meaning for each of us today, and how, over these 200 years, their work so carefully stated, has needed only 26 amendments added to the original freedom document, our Constitution of the United States of America.

The opening scene, as well as all others to follow takes place in the Philadelphia State House at 6th and Chestnut in one of the chambers. The delegates arriving on this particular day are in a jovial mood, since it is the day for the signing of the Constitution, which has taken 115 hot summer days to complete. Some of the delegates are just standing around, others are talking in small groups, while others are entering. James Madison is in the middle of the room talking. He politely bows to the person he was talking to, and proceeds to the right part of the stage. As he approaches his spot, the delegates begin to seat themselves, and when all are seated, Madison begins to speak to the audience.	MADISON	GOOD EVENING, AND WELCOME TO THIS HISTORICAL EVENT IN THE LIFE OF OUR NATION. THE DELEGATES FROM ALL OUR STATES EXCEPT RHODE ISLAND, ON THIS THE 17TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1787 ARE NOW GETTING READY TO SIGN THE CONSTITUTION. OH! ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. I AM JAMES MADISON, A MEMBER OF THE VIRGINIA DELEGATION. I AM TO SERVE AS YOUR HOST AND MODERATOR, AND I SUPPOSE SELECTED FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT BECAUSE OF MY WORK WITH THE VIRIGINIA DELEGATION. I ALSO FELT FUTURE GENERATIONS WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR AN EXACT ACCOUNT OF WHAT MIGHT PASS AT THIS CONVENTION, EVEN THOUGH I KEEP MY ACCOUNT AS A PRIVATE MATTER, AND KNOWN TO NO ONE ELSE. BEFORE JOINING THE DELEGATES FOR THE SIGNING, LET ME TELL YOU OF SOME OF THE EVENTS WHICH HAVE LED TO THIS IMPORTANT MOMENT. WHILE OTHERS IN THE PAST HAD TRIED TO GIVE MORE POWER TO CONGRESS, VERY LITTLE WAS ACCOMPLISHED UNTIL A REPORT WAS SENT TO CONGRESS LAST SEPTEMBER AS A RESULT OF A MEETING HELD IN ANNAPOLIS.

MADISON	BECAUSE OF OUR RECENT OYSTER WARS, NAVIGATION RIGHTS AS WELL AS OTHER NAVIGATION PROBLEMS, A NUMBER OF STATES RECEIVED A RESOLUTION FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA TO APPOINT COMMISSIONERS TO MEET AT ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND ON THE 11TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1786 TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE TRADE AND COMMERCE CONCERNS OF THE UNITED STATES. SINCE ONLY THE STATES OF VIRGINIA, DELAWARE, PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY AND NEW YORK ATTENDED THIS MEETING, THE COMMISSIONERS FELT IT NOT ADVISABLE TO PROCEED WITH THE BUSINESS OF THE CONFERENCE. ALONG WITH THE TRADE AND COMMERCE CONCERNS, OUR YOUNG NATION WAS FACING OTHER PROBLEMS, SOME STATES WERE ATTEMPTING TO MAKE DEALS WITH FOREIGN NATIONS, THERE WAS TALK OF THREE SEPARATE CONFEDERATIONS, THERE WERE STATE BOUNDARY DISPUTES, STATES DEFAULTED IN PAYMENT OF THEIR TAXES, CONGRESS COULD NOT PASS NEEDED LEGISLATION, AND JUST RECENTLY, THE SHAY'S REBELLION IN MASSACHUSETTS. CONSCIOUS OF THEIR ORIGINAL MISSION, THE ANNAPOLIS COMMISSIONERS AGREED THAT A FUTURE CONFERENCE WITH ALL STATES PRESENT WAS NEEDED, NOT ONLY TO DISCUSS TRADE AND COMMERCE, BUT ALSO FOR OTHER PURPOSES AS THE SITUATION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS FOR THE WELFARE OF THE UNITED STATES MAY BE FOUND.

MADISON	THE COMMISSIONERS VIEWED THESE PROBLEMS SO SERIOUS THAT IN THEIR REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE STATES AND TO CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, THEY ASKED FOR ALL STATES TO APPOINT COMMISSIONERS TO MEET HERE IN PHILADELPHIA IN MAY TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE SITUATION OF THE UNITED STATES, AND TO MAKE THOSE CHANGES NECESSARY TO RENDER THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION ADEQUATE TO THE EXIGENCIES OF THE UNION. THEY WERE THEN TO REPORT ON SUCH ACTIVITIES TO THE CONGRESS, AND WHEN AGREED ON BY CONGRESS, AND LATER BY THE LEGISLATURES OF EVERY STATE, TO BECOME THE LAW OF THE LAND. THESE MEN SUGGESTED TO CONGRESS THAT THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION NEEDED CHANGING, AND THAT A CONVENTION APPROVED BY CONGRESS WAS THE BEST WAY TO DO IT. AFTER A LOT OF DEBATING OVER THE ANNAPOLIS REQUEST, THE FOLLOWING MOTION WAS MADE BY THE MASSACHUSETTS DELEGATES, AND PASSED.

Another spotlight falls on an individual near but not in Madison's path, who reads the motion.	VOICE	"BECAUSE THERE ARE RULES IN THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION FOR MAKING CHANGES AGREED UPON BY CONGRESS AND BY STATE LEGISLATURES; AND BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN SHOWN THAT THERE NEED TO BE CHANGES MADE IN THE PRESENT CONFEDERATION... RESOLVED, THAT IN THE OPINION OF CONGRESS, THAT ON THE SECOND MONDAY IN MAY, A CONVENTION OF DELEGATES APPOINTED BY THE STATES BE HELD AT PHILADELPHIA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF CORRECTING THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION, AND REPORTING TO CONGRESS AND THE STATE LEGISLATURES THESE CHANGES, THAT WHEN AGREED TO IN CONGRESS AND BY THE STATES, SHALL RENDER THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION ADEQUATE TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE UNION."
The light fades out leaving Madison again in the only other spot.	MADISON	THE DELEGATES BEGAN ARRIVING HERE IN PHILADELPHIA ON MONDAY, THE 14TH OF MAY, BUT IT WASN'T UNTIL THE 25TH OF MAY THAT MOST OF THE DELEGATES WERE PRESENT, AND THE OFFICIAL BUSINESS OF THE CONVENTION COULD BEGIN. OF THE 74 DELEGATES APPOINTED, ONLY 55 ATTENDED. THE FIREY PATRICK HENRY OF VIRGINIA WAS INVITED, BUT DID NOT CHOOSE TO COME, SAYING THAT HE "SMELT A RAT." ABSENT WERE OTHER IMPORTANT PEOPLE LIKE JOHN ADAMS WHO WAS IN LONDON, THOMAS JEFFERSON WHO WAS IN PARIS, AND—AND JOHN JAY OF NEW YORK WAS NOT INVITED AT ALL!
The light shining on Madison fades as Madison walks back and takes his seat in the middle of the delegation.		IT WAS ALSO ON THE 25TH THAT WE ELECTED OUR BELOVED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AS PRESIDENT OF THE CONVENTION.

13

Lights begin to focus in on the total convention all now seated.	ROBERT MORRIS	GENTLEMEN, WE WILL NEED A STRONG LEADER TO GUIDE US IN OUR ACTIONS. I SUGGEST THAT WE ELECT A PRESIDENT BY SECRET BALLOT.
	JOHN RUTLEDGE	I AGREE WITH MR. MORRIS.
	JOHNSON	HERE! HERE!
	WILSON	PROCEED WITH THE ELECTION, MR. MORRIS
	ROBERT MORRIS	THANK YOU. I PLACE IN NOMINATION HIS EXCELLENCY, GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON. IF THERE ARE OTHER NOMINATIONS, OR IF YOU WANT, YOU MAY WRITE IN SOMEONE OF YOUR CHOICE ON THE BALLOT NOW BEING PASSED OUT.
The ballots are passed out and then collected by Paterson, Johnson and Wilson. These gentlemen gather around the table to help Morris count. Rutledge gets up and joins Morris at Washington's chair. All Delegates stand and clap as Morris and Rutledge conduct Washington to the chair where he sits.		GENTLEMEN! I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT GENERAL WASHINGTON HAS BEEN ELECTED TO SERVE AS PRESIDENT OF THIS CONVENTION. IF YOU WILL, PLEASE ALLOW THE HONORABLE JOHN RUTLEDGE AND MYSELF TO ESCORT GENERAL WASHINGTON TO THE PRESIDENT'S CHAIR.

All Delegates are seated along with Morris and Rutledge. As soon as Morris and Rutledge are seated, Washington then stands.	WASHINGTON	MR. MORRIS, MR. RUTLEDGE, AND HONORABLE DELEGATES, THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITH IN ME. IN MY YEARS OF SERVICE TO THIS NATION I HAVE NEVER BEEN IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS. I HOPE YOU WILL FORGIVE ME FOR ANY ERRORS I MAY MAKE AS I CARRY OUT THE PURPOSE OF THIS VERY IMPORTANT CONVENTION. WITH GOD'S HELP, I WILL TRY TO GUIDE THE THINKING AND ACTIONS OF THIS CONVENTION, MADE UP OF PEOPLE I CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT CITIZENS OF THIS REPUBLIC, AND KNOWN FOR YOUR FINE CHARACTER, TALENT, AND PATRIOTISM DURING OUR STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, AND MANY WHO NOW SERVE OUR COUNTRY IN THE CONGRESS.
Washington places his hands behind his back and begins to speak once again.		LET ME TELL YOU, AS YOUR PRESIDENT, HOW I FEEL ABOUT OUR NATION, AND OF THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION, WHICH NOW GOVERN OUR STATES. THE CONFEDERATION IS NOT DOING WHAT IT IS SUPPOSED TO DO TO HELP OUR NATION. THE CONGRESS IS FAILING TO CARRY OUT ITS DUTIES, AND WHEN CONGRESS DOES PASS LAWS, THE STATES DO NOT OBEY THEM. THIS ISN'T THE WAY TO RUN A GOVERNMENT. IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT WHILE WE ARE A NATION JOINED TOGETHER, WE FAIL TO GIVE OUR CONGRESS THE POWER TO KEEP US THAT WAY. WE ARE EITHER A UNITED PEOPLE UNDER ONE GOVERNMENT, OR WE ARE THIRTEEN INDEPENDENT NATIONS ALWAYS FIGHTING EACH OTHER. THIRTEEN NATIONS WORKING AGAINST EACH OTHER, AND PULLING AT CONGRESS WILL SOON DESTROY ALL OF US. BUT A GOOD AND UP-TO-DATE CONSTITUTION, WITH CHECKS AND BALANCES WILL HELP US BECOME A SOUND AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

	WASHINGTON	SOME OF OUR PEOPLE NOW SAY WE SHOULD HAVE A KING, LIKE ENGLAND. HOW AWFUL! THINK WHAT A VICTORY THIS WOULD BE FOR OUR ENEMIES IF WE WERE TO GIVE UP OUR DEMOCRACY. WHAT A JOY THEY WOULD HAVE KNOWING THAT OUR WAY OF LIFE COULD NOT LAST! AND THAT A GOVERNMENT BASED ON EQUALITY AND LIBERTY REPRESENTS ONLY IDEALS WHICH DO NOT WORK!
After delivering his talk Washington takes his seat once again.		WE CANNOT EXIST AS A NATION WITHOUT A STRONG CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. WE NEED A GOVERNMENT WHERE OUR LIVES, LIBERTIES, AND PROPERTIES WILL BE SAFE. WE MUST ACT NOW FOR A STRONG GOVERNMENT.
On the back of Washington's chair there is a painted rising sun as a part of the design of the chair.	PATERSON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. PATERSON.
	PATERSON	MR. PRESIDENT, I COULD NOT AGREE MORE WITH YOU FOR A STRONGER CONGRESS. JUST LOOK AT OUR NATION'S FINANCIAL SITUATION.
	MARTIN	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. MARTIN.
	MARTIN	I FOR ONE ALSO MUST AGREE THAT OUR CONGRESS HAS BEEN WEAK, CONTEMPTIBLY WEAK!
	PINCKNEY	MR. PRESIDENT
	WASHINGTON	MR. PINCKNEY.
	PINCKNEY	ALLOW ME, SIR, ON YOUR ELECTION TO PLACE IN YOUR HANDS THIS GAVEL MADE FROM STURDY SOUTH CAROLINA LIVE OAK—I DOUBT MY NEED FOR IT AT THIS CONVENTION. MAY IT BE USED ON THOSE OCCASIONS YOU FEEL NECESSARY—FOR YOUR PROTECTION—AS WELL AS OURS.
Laughter from the group.		

Again, laughter from the group. The gavel is laid to the right of Washington but never used. For order he needs only to rap gently with his knuckles.	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU MR. PINCKNEY, I HOPE THAT MY ONLY USE OF THIS INSTRUMENT WILL BE IN RAPPING CONSTRUCTIVE THOUGHTS INTO OUR BRAINS, AND IN PRODUCING PURE ACTIONS FROM OUR HEARTS, RATHER THAN IN SEEKING ORDER OR DECORUM.
Mifflin stands, and in a hesitant voice speaks.	MIFFLIN	GENERAL WASHINGTON.
	WASHINGTON	GENERAL MIFFLIN.
	MIFFLIN	GENERAL, WHILE WE HAVE EXPERIENCED SOME NEGATIVE FEELINGS TOWARDS EACH OTHER IN THE PAST, WHAT IS PASSED, IS NOW PASSED. I FEEL THE ISSUE AT HAND IS OF SUCH MAGNITUDE TO THIS NATION THAT THOSE OF US ASSEMBLED AT THIS CONVENTION MUST GIVE OF OUR TOTAL TALENTS TO SUCCEED. I, SIR, HAVE TAKEN THAT FIRST STEP, FOR YOU WILL NOTE THAT THE VOTE FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP AT THIS CONVENTION WAS UNANIMOUS.
	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU, GENERAL MIFFLIN, FOR YOUR EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT. THIS NATION HAS COME A LONG WAY SINCE VALLEY FORGE. AS YOU HAVE SAID, WHAT IS PASSED IS PASSED, AND WE MUST GO FORWARD. I HAVE ALWAYS VALUED YOUR SERVICE AS A SOLDIER-POLITICIAN, AND ESPECIALLY THE VALUE OF YOUR INFLUENCE, NOT ONLY ON THE SOLDIERS YOU COMMANDED, BUT ALSO YOUR INFLUENCE ON THE CIVILIAN POPULATION. AND NOW, AS A POLITICIAN IN YOUR OWN STATE. I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOUR INVOLVEMENT DURING THIS CONVENTION, AND IN LATER RATIFICATION, WILL PROVE MOST WORTHY.

Wilson rises.	WILSON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. WILSON.
	WILSON	I MOVE THAT A SECRETARY BE ELECTED TO KEEP THE MINUTES OF THE CONVENTION.
	WASHINGTON	IT IS SO MOVED.
	WILSON	I NOMINATE MR. TEMPLE FRANKLIN, GRANDSON OF DR. FRANKLIN.
	HAMILTON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	COLONEL HAMILTON.
	HAMILTON	I WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE THE DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN FROM PHILADELPHIA, MAJOR WILLIAM JACKSON.
	WASHINGTON	IF THERE ARE NO OTHER NOMINATIONS, WE WILL PROCEED TO CAST THE BALLOTS BY STATES.
Again the ballots are collected and counted by Paterson, Johnson and Wilson, and given to Washington.		

Madison begins to move again to the right of the stage, while balloting takes place. The lights fade on the Convention, the other spot follows Madison to his now familiar stage position.	MADISON	THE SECRETARIAL ELECTION RESULTS SHOWED 5 STATES VOTING FOR MAJOR JACKSON, AND 2 FOR MR. FRANKLIN. THE ELECTION WAS FOLLOWED BY THE USUAL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT FOR THE DAY. ON TUESDAY, THE 29TH OF MAY, GOVERNOR RANDOLPH OF VIRGINIA OUTLINED 15 CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTIONS FOR THE DELEGATES TO DISCUSS. LET'S LISTEN TO GOVERNOR RANDOLPH AS HE SPEAKS ON THESE RESOLUTIONS.
The lights now center on the main body of the Convention. Madison moves back to his seat and when seated, Randolph stands.	RANDOLPH	MR. PRESIDENT, LET ME BEGIN BY SAYING THAT IN MAKING CORRECTIONS IN THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION, IT IS NECESSARY TO FIRST STUDY THOSE THINGS A GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO HAVE. SECONDLY, TO LOOK AT THE ERRORS OF THE CONFEDERATION. THIRDLY, TO UNDERSTAND THE DANGERS OF OUR SITUATION, AND FOURTHLY, TO OFFER A REMEDY. WHILE THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION HAVE DONE ALL THAT WAS EXPECTED, THERE ARE, HOWEVER, TOO MANY FAULTS, WHICH BRINGS ME TO MY SECOND POINT, THE WRONGS. WE ARE NOT SAFE AGAINST OUR ENEMIES. WE CANNOT STOP QUARRELS BETWEEN STATES. WE CAN'T EVEN AGREE ON TRADE OR COMMERCE. WE CANNOT PROTECT OURSELVES AGAINST MORE STATE POWER, AND FINALLY, THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION ARE SEEN AS LESS OF IMPORTANCE THAN OUR OWN STATE CONSTITUTIONS.

Randolph takes a copy of the resolution from the table and proceeds to read the 15 resolutions.	RANDOLPH	THE DANGERS I MENTIONED EARLIER EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT, AND I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU ABOUT THEM. SO LET ME GO TO MY FOURTH POINT WHICH IS THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, BY OUTLINING THE 15 FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS: 1. TO CORRECT THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION TO ACCOMPLISH THE ORIGINAL OBJECTS OF COMMON DEFENSE, SECURITY OF LIBERTY, AND GENERAL WELFARE. 2. TO CORRECT VOTING RIGHTS IN CONGRESS BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF TAX MONEY COLLECTED OR ON THE NUMBER OF FREE PEOPLE LIVING THERE. 3. TO MAKE THE NATIONAL LEGISLATURE CONSIST OF TWO BRANCHES. 4. THE MEMBERS OF THE FIRST TO BE ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE SEVERAL STATES AT CERTAIN TIMES FOR A GIVEN NUMBER OF YEARS. 5. TO HAVE MEMBERS OF THE SECOND BRANCH ELECTED BY THOSE OF THE FIRST FROM AMONG THOSE WHO SHOULD BE NOMINATED BY THE STATE LEGISLATURES. 6. TO GIVE CONGRESS THE RIGHT TO MAKE LAWS; TO VOID ALL LAWS PASSED BY THE INDIVIDUAL STATES THAT MIGHT GO AGAINST THE CONSTITUTION, AND TO SEEK HELP FROM ALL STATES AGAINST ANY STATE THAT SHOULD FAIL TO CARRY OUT ITS DUTIES AS STATED IN THE CONSTITUTION.

	RANDOLPH	7. TO ELECT A QUALIFIED PERSON TO SERVE AS PRESIDENT FOR A GIVEN NUMBER OF YEARS. 8. TO LOOK AT EVERY ACT OF THE CONGRESS BEFORE IT BECOMES LAW. 9. TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL COURT SYSTEM, AND TO OUTLINE THEIR DUTIES, POWERS, AND PRIVILEGES. 10. TO PROVIDE FOR THE ENTRY OF NEW STATES INTO THE UNION. 11. TO GUARANTEE A REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT TO EACH STATE AND TERRITORY. 12. TO ALLOW CONGRESS TO CONTINUE UNTIL A NEW CONSTITUTION IS ESTABLISHED. 13. TO ALLOW FOR CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION WHENEVER NECESSARY. 14. TO REQUIRE THE LEGISLATURES, GOVERNORS, AND COURTS WITHIN ALL STATES TO SUPPORT THE UNITED STATES. 15. TO SUBMIT CHANGES MADE BY THIS CONVENTION FIRST TO CONGRESS, AND THEN TO THE STATES FOR APPROVAL. I THANK THE DELEGATES FOR THEIR ATTENTION AND INTEREST.
Randolph upon finishing takes his seat once again.		

	PINCKNEY	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. PINCKNEY.
Pinckney gets up and takes his plan over to the secretary.	PINCKNEY	I FIND IT HARD FOR ME TO SPEAK AFTER LISTENING TO THE OUTSTANDING PRESENTATION AND PLAN GIVEN BY GOVERNOR RANDOLPH. MANY OF THE POINTS I WOULD HAVE TALKED ABOUT HAVE BEEN COVERED, AND FOR THIS REASON, I SEE NO NEED TO REPEAT THEM. ALLOW ME JUST TO GIVE MY PROPOSED SYSTEM TO THE SECRETARY FOR HIM TO SEND TO THE PROPER STUDY COMMITTEE.
	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU, MR. PINCKNEY, YOUR PLAN WILL BE STUDIED ALONG WITH THE VIRGINIA PLAN.
	PATERSON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. PATERSON.
	PATERSON	I DO NOT AGREE WITH THE EARLIER PRESENTED VIRGINIA PLAN OR WITH THE SOUTH CAROLINA PLAN. IN DEFENSE OF WHAT WE NOW HAVE, LET ME INTRODUCE A PLAN BASED ON THE FACT THAT A NEW CONSTITUTION IS NOT NEEDED! ONLY THAT WE UPDATE THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION————————AND NOTHING MORE!

As a champion for staterights, Paterson is emotionally upset with Randolph's Plan. He feels the plan has gone beyond the Congressional Resolution. He presses his points hard and strong and boisterously, accentuating his points with the swinging of arms and fists.	PATERSON	MY NEW JERSEY PLAN IS, FIRST OF ALL, IN KEEPING WITH OUR OWN PURPOSE. AND SECONDLY, IT IS IN KEEPING WITH THE THOUGHTS OF THE PEOPLE. ANY NEW PLAN WILL DESTROY THE RIGHTS OF THE STATES, AND CAN NEVER BE APPROVED. I ALSO BELIEVE MOST AMERICANS FEEL THAT GIVING MORE POWERS TO THE CONGRESS WOULD SATISFY EVERYONE. ANY OTHER CHANGES BEYOND THIS IDEA WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE! LET US NOW GO ABOUT CHANGING THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION AND CARRY OUT OUR DUTY——AND THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONVENTION!
	HAMILTON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	COLONEL HAMILTON.
	HAMILTON	I AM NOT IN AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW JERSEY PLAN AS OUTLINED BY MR. PATERSON. I BELIEVE THAT NO AMENDMENTS TO THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION AS OUTLINED IN THE NEW JERSEY PLAN CAN GIVE US A GOOD GOVERNMENT, AND I DO NOT CARE FOR THE VIRGINIA PLAN. MY FEELING IS THAT BOTH PLANS WOULD SOON DESTROY OUR NATION. I BELIEVE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS THE BEST MODEL THE WORLD HAS EVER PRODUCED, HAVING BOTH PUBLIC STRENGTH AND INDIVIDUAL SECURITY. I AM NOT SURE WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO. I AM FOR A GENERAL GOVERNMENT. I DON'T THINK A REPUBLICAN FORM OF GOVERNMENT CAN SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS, YET I STILL WANT TO SUPPORT THE REPUBLICAN PRINCIPLES.

	HAMILTON	BUT CAN A DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY, WHOSE MEMBERS CHANGE EACH YEAR, ACTUALLY KNOW WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT? I FEEL THAT NOTHING BUT A PERMANENT GROUP CAN SOLVE THE PROBLEMS WHICH DEVELOP OUT OF THIS TYPE OF DEMOCRACY. I WOULD SUGGEST THAT A PRESIDENT BE APPOINTED TO CARRY OUT THE DUTIES OF THE OFFICE FOR AS LONG AS HE IS LIKED BY THE PEOPLE, AND BY THE CONGRESS, AND GIVE HIM THE POWER TO VETO ALL BILLS AND LAWS. YOU MIGHT SAY THAT THIS REPRESENTS AN ELECTIVE MONARCHY. BUT WHAT IS A MONARCHY? CAN'T OUR GOVERNORS BE CONSIDERED IN THIS SAME WAY? OF COURSE, THEY CAN, AND BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT CAN BE IMPEACHED, THE TERM "MONARCHY" CANNOT APPLY. LET ELECTORS BE APPOINTED IN OUR STATES TO ELECT CONGRESSMEN. LET ONE BRANCH BE ELECTED FOR THREE YEARS, BY THE PEOPLE, AND THE SENATE ELECTED BY THE ELECTORS, AND REMAIN IN OFFICE FOR LIFE. I WOULD GIVE CONGRESS THE POWER OF PASSING ALL LAWS WITHOUT EXCEPTION. I WOULD HAVE SUPREME COURT OFFICERS APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT, AND ALLOW THE CONGRESS TO APPOINT COURTS IN EACH STATE. I WOULD HAVE ALL THE ARMY AND THE APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

	HAMILTON	LASTLY, WE MUST ABOLISH ALL STATE LAWS WHICH CONFLICT WITH THE GENERAL LAWS.
Hamilton becomes a bit sanguine at this point.		I MUST SAY THAT MY PLAN, AS WELL AS THE VIRGINIA PLAN, DO NOT INVOLVE THE PEOPLE TO THE SAME DEGREE AS THE NEW JERSEY PLAN. HOWEVER, AS PEOPLE GRADUALLY RIPEN IN THEIR OPINIONS OF GOVERNMENT, THEY BEGIN TO GET TIRED OF AN EXCESS OF DEMOCRACY—AND WHAT MORE IS THE VIRGINIA PLAN BUT PORK STILL WITH A LITTLE CHANGE OF SAUCE?
	WILSON	NO! NO! NEVER! NEVER!
Delegates get up; some shake, point fingers and others their fists at Hamilton who is standing.	PATERSON	WE HAVE JUST OVERTHROWN ONE MONARCHY!
	MARTIN	WHERE ARE THE STATES' RIGHTS? DO YOU TAKE AWAY THE STATES' RIGHTS?
Washington raps on the desk with his knuckles, and the delegates take their seats and quiet down.	MORRIS	FROM ONE FORCED TYRANT TO AN ELECTED ONE!
Mr. Wilson rising.	WASHINGTON	GENTLEMEN———GENTLEMEN———PLEASE! PLEASE TAKE YOUR SEATS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND PLAN, COLONEL HAMILTON.
	WILSON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. WILSON.
	WILSON	LET US LOOK AT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE VIRGINIA AND THE NEW JERSEY PLANS. WHEN I LOOK AT BOTH PLANS I FIND:

WILSON	THE VIRGINIA PLAN CALLS FOR TWO BRANCHES IN THE CONGRESS. THE NEW JERSEY PLAN CALLS FOR A SINGLE LEGISLATIVE BODY. THE VIRGINIA PLAN PROPOSES LEGISLATIVE POWERS FROM THE PEOPLE. THE NEW JERSEY PLAN SEEKS LEGISLATIVE POWER FROM THE STATE. THE VIRGINIA PLAN PROPOSES A ONE PERSON PRESIDENT. THE NEW JERSEY PLAN CALLS FOR MORE THAN ONE PERSON. THE VIRGINIA PLAN STATES THAT A MAJORITY OF CONGRESS CAN ACT. THE NEW JERSEY PLAN INDICATES THAT A SMALL MAJORITY CAN CONTROL. THE VIRGINIA PLAN ALLOWS CONGRESS TO LEGISLATE ON ALL NATIONAL ISSUES. THE NEW JERSEY PLAN SEEKS LEGISLATION ONLY ON LIMITED OBJECTS. THE VIRGINIA PLAN GIVES CONGRESS POWER TO OVERRIDE STATE LAWS. THE NEW JERSEY PLAN GIVES POWER TO THE EXECUTIVE TO COMPEL OBEDIENCE BY FORCE. THE VIRGINIA PLAN MAY REMOVE THE PRESIDENT BY IMPEACHMENT. THE NEW JERSEY PLAN CALLS FOR IMPEACHMENT DONE BY A MAJORITY OF STATES. THE VIRGINIA PLAN PROPOSES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL AND STATE COURTS. THE NEW JERSEY PLAN MAKES NO PROVISIONS FOR STATE COURTS. MR. PRESIDENT, IT SEEMS THAT THE NEW JERSEY PLAN DOES NOT FIT OUR PURPOSE. OUR PEOPLE EXPECT US TO FORM A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, AND THEREFORE I SUPPORT THE VIRGINIA PLAN.
WASHINGTON	THANK YOU, MR. WILSON.

Johnson standing up.	JOHNSON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	DR. JOHNSON.
	JOHNSON	IT APPEARS TO ME THAT THE NEW JERSEY PLAN CALLS FOR STRONG STATE GOVERNMENTS, WHILE THE VIRGINIA PLAN SEEKS A STRONG NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. MR. HAMILTON PROPOSED A PLAN TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM BOTH. AND WHILE HE HAS BEEN PRAISED BY EVERYONE, NONE HAVE COME FORTH TO SUPPORT HIS PLAN. WHEN I LOOK AT ALL OF THE PLANS BEFORE US AT THIS CONVENTION, I LIKE THE VIRGINIA PLAN THE BEST.
Towards the end of Dr. Johnson's speech, Madison rises from his seat and proceeds to his spot. The lights on the Convention dim, and Madison, again, is in the spot.	MADISON	AND SO, FROM THE 29TH OF MAY, THE DELEGATES WENT ABOUT THE TASK OF HAMMERING OUT A CONSTITUTION LARGELY BASED ON MR. RANDOLPH'S 15 PROPOSALS AND WORDING OFTEN SUPPLIED BY GOUVERNEUR MORRIS. AT TIMES, THE DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN INTENSE, AND AT TIMES MUCH HEATED. I CAN RECALL, ON ONE OCCASION, DR. FRANKLIN PROPOSING THAT A CLERGYMAN BE INVITED TO OFFER CALMING PRAYERS TO OPEN EACH SESSION, TO WHICH COLONEL HAMILTON SNAPPED THAT THE CONVENTION COULD TRANSACT ITS BUSINESS WITHOUT THE NECESSITY OF CALLING IN FOREIGN AID. DEBATES CONTINUED THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER ON DELEGATE EQUITY BETWEEN BIG AND SMALL STATES; THE POWERS OF CONGRESS, THE PRESIDENT AND THE JUDICIARY; COMMERCE, TARIFFS AND NAVIGATION, REVENUE AND TAXES, SLAVERY, THE BILL OF RIGHTS, THE LOCAL MILITIA, AND, OF COURSE, THE GREAT COMPROMISE.

	MADISON	SOME HAVE DESCRIBED OUR CONSTITUTIONAL EFFORTS AS THE RESULT OF COMPROMISES. ALLOW ME A MOMENT TO BRIEFLY ELABORATE. THE GREATEST ISSUE WHICH THREATENED TO BRING THE CONVENTION TO A HALT WAS DECIDING IF REPRESENTATION IN THE CONGRESS SHOULD BE BY STATES OR BY NUMBERS OF PEOPLE, OR BY WEALTH. THE SOLUTION TO THIS ISSUE WAS REFERRED TO AS THE GREAT COMPROMISE. LET'S LISTEN TO DR. JOHNSON IN HIS EFFORTS TO SETTLE DEBATE ON THIS ISSUE.
Johnson stands to be recognized, and the Convention spotlight now shines on Johnson as well as on Madison.	JOHNSON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	DR. JOHNSON.
	JOHNSON	I WOULD LIKE TO REMIND THIS CONVENTION AND YOU, SIR, MR. PATERSON, THAT AMERICA IS FOR MANY PURPOSES. ONE POLITICAL SOCIETY, COMPOSED OF INDIVIDUALS, AND TO YOU, MR. MADISON, THAT THE STATES ARE ALSO POLITICAL SOCIETIES WITH INTERESTS ALL THEIR OWN. I RECOGNIZE BOTH INTERESTS, AND FIND THESE TWO OPPOSING FORCES NOT WORKING AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, BUT TO THE CONTRARY, FUNCTIONING AS HALVES OF A UNIQUE WHOLE. AS SUCH, BOTH SHOULD BE COMBINED, SO THAT IN ONE BRANCH OF THE LEGISLATURE THE PEOPLE OUGHT TO BE REPRESENTED, AND IN THE OTHER, TO RECOGNIZE THE STATES. I AM FOR SUCH A COMPROMISE!
Madison speaks, and begins to walk towards the Convention delegates to join them.	MADISON	AND WHILE THE MAJORITY OF DELEGATES HAVE STAYED AND SERVED THE CONVENTION, SOME HAVE LEFT AND GONE TO THEIR RESPECTIVE HOMES.

	MADISON	GEORGE WYTHE OF VIRGINIA LEFT TO BE WITH HIS DYING WIFE. WILLIAM HOUSTON OF NEW JERSEY WENT HOME TO FACE A SLOW PAINFUL DEATH. WILLIAM DAVIE OF NORTH CAROLINA LEFT OUT OF BOREDOM. ROBERT YATES AND JOHN LANSING OF NEW YORK, STAUNCH STATES RIGHTS SUPPORTERS LEFT, THEY SAID, TO JOIN GOVERNOR CLINTON. AND NOW, MR. LUTHER MARTIN, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MARYLAND, IS GETTING READY TO LEAVE. LET'S LISTEN TO HIS REASON FOR LEAVING.
The spotlight on Madison dims, and the light comes on again where the other delegates are assembled. Mr. Martin rises and begins to speak without being recognized by Washington. Martin speaks with anger.	MARTIN	GENERAL WASHINGTON, WHEN I TOOK MY SEAT IN THIS CONVENTION, I WAS SURPRISED TO FIND A CONSTITUTIONAL PLAN WHICH, I BELIEVE, NEVER ENTERED THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE I REPRESENT. IT IS A PLAN I CONSIDER NOT ONLY BAD FOR THE INTERESTS AND RIGHTS OF MY STATE, BUT ALSO NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE POLITICAL HAPPINESS AND FREEDOM OF ALL OUR STATES. LET ME READ MR. RANDOLPH'S FIRST RESOLUTION, AND THEN COMPARE IT WITH THE COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION. THE ORIGINAL—RESOLVED THAT THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION BE CORRECTED TO ACCOMPLISH THE OBJECTIVES OF COMMON DEFENSE, SECURITY OF LIBERTY, AND GENERAL WELFARE. NOW, LET ME READ THE REVISED RESOLUTION—RESOLVED THAT A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO BE ESTABLISHED, CONSISTING OF A SURPREME LEGISLATURE, EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIARY. I SEE, SIR, NO MENTION TO CORRECT THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION. I SEE ONLY THAT OF A PROPOSED NATIONAL GOVERNMENT!

43

44

Martin begins to shout at this point of delivery. Martin begins to leave.	MARTIN	I REPEAT! A GOVERNMENT—A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT—SO AWFUL DO I SEE THIS PLAN TO THE HAPPINESS OF MY COUNTRY, I WOULD CHEERFULLY GIVE UP ALL THE WEALTH I HAVE, AND LIVE IN POVERTY, IF I COULD SOME WAY STOP THIS PLAN FROM BEING ACCEPTED BY MY FELLOW COUNTRYMEN. GENTLEMEN! YOUR EXCELLENCY! THEY SAY I AM NEEDED AT HOME. I MUST LEAVE THIS CONVENTION—I BID YOU GOODBYE!
Pinckney jumps up, and shouts!	PINCKNEY	SHAME! SHAME! SIR!
Wilson rises with no recognition given from the chair.	WILSON	I HEARD, MR. MARTIN, YOUR LACK OF EYESIGHT RESULTED IN A COLLISION WITH A COW! I NOW HAVE JUST HEARD, SIR, THAT IN MY OWN JUDGEMENT YOU ALSO SUFFER FROM A LACK OF NATIONAL VISION. THIS, SIR, IS A CONSTITUTION FOR ALL STATES—FOR A UNITED STATES!
Other delegates mutter and talk among themselves.	DELEGATE VOICES	HERE! HERE!
Washington, rapping his knuckles on the table, quietly speaks.	WASHINGTON	GENTLEMEN! GENTLEMEN! LET US CONTINUE ON.
Martin walks out of the Convention, and as the spotlight fades on the delegates, Madison heads for his position, and the spot is now shining on him.	MADISON	THE CONVENTION NEEDED ONLY FOUR DAYS, FROM SEPTEMBER 12TH TO 15TH FOR THE LAST REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION. ON THE 15TH, THE CONSTITUTION WAS READY FOR A FINAL WRITING AND SIGNATURES.

	MADISON	BUT WAIT! AN UNEXPECTED TURN OF EVENTS HAS OCCURRED! WHAT HAS BEEN BOTHERING SOME DELEGATES HAS NOW COME OUT IN THE OPEN. OF THE 42 DELEGATES LEFT AT THE CONVENTION, 3 HAVE DECIDED THAT THEY CANNOT SUPPORT, OR EVEN SIGN THE CONSTITUTION. THESE ARE IMPORTANT AND POWERFUL MEN—MR. GERRY OF MASSACHUSETTS, AND COLONEL MASON AND GOVERNOR RANDOLPH OF VIRGINIA. WHAT REASONS DO THEY GIVE FOR NOT SIGNING?
The spotlight shifts back to the convention and Mr. Gerry of Massachusetts speaks first.	GERRY	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. GERRY.
	GERRY	MR. PRESIDENT, IT IS VERY PAINFUL FOR ME TO DIFFER FROM THOSE WHO WILL SIGN THE CONSTITUTION, BUT I STRONGLY FEEL THAT THE LIBERTIES OF AMERICA WERE NOT INCLUDED, AND IT IS, THEREFORE, MY DUTY TO OPPOSE IT. WHILE WE WERE DEVELOPING THE PLAN, I TRIED TO ACCEPT IT AS BEST I COULD. BUT AS THE PLAN IS NOW, I FEAR THAT A CIVIL WAR MAY RESULT. I SEE THE DANGER OF THIS HAPPENING IN MASSACHUSETTS. IN MY STATE THERE ARE TWO PARTIES: ONE FAVORING DEMOCRACY, THE WORST OF ALL POLITICAL EVILS, AND THE OTHER, AS BAD IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. I FEAR MUCH CONFUSION FROM THESE PARTIES IN OPPOSING AND RESISTING THE CONSTITUTION. FOR THIS REASON, I FEEL THIS CONSTITUTION WOULD NOT SOLVE OUR PROBLEM AND, THEREFORE, I CANNOT SIGN MY NAME TO IT.

George Mason now rises to speak.	MASON	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	COLONEL MASON.
	MASON	MR. PRESIDENT, WE HAVE GIVEN A LOT OF THOUGHT TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL, AND OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. YET, I DO NOT FIND IN THIS DOCUMENT A DECLARATION OF RIGHTS. WHAT I DO FIND IS THAT THE LAWS OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT ARE NOW TO BECOME MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE LAWS OF THE STATES. I FEEL THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS WE NOW ENJOY IN OUR SEPARATE STAES ARE NO LONGER SAFE. I ALSO BELIEVE IF THIS CONSTITUTION IS ACCEPTED, OUR COUNTRY WILL BEGIN AS A MODERATE ARISTOCRACY, AND WIND UP AS A MONARCHY, OR A CORRUPT OPPRESSIVE ARISTOCRACY. THIS CONSTITUTION HAS BEEN WRITTEN WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE, OR EVEN THE IDEAS FROM OUR CITIZENS. ONCE THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW IT, I BELIEVE A SECOND CONVENTION IS NEEDED TO MAKE ANY CHANGES THEY MIGHT HAVE SUGGESTED. IT IS NOT RIGHT TO SAY TO OUR PEOPLE—TAKE THIS OR NOTHING. AS THE CONSTITUTION NOW IS WRITTEN, I CANNOT GIVE IT MY SUPPORT HERE OR IN VIRGINIA. AND I CANNOT SIGN HERE WHAT I CANNOT SUPPORT THERE.
Mason takes his seat, and Randolph now rises.	RANDOLPH	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	GOVERNOR RANDOLPH.

	RANDOLPH	YOUR EXCELLENCY, ALL HERE AT THIS CONVENTION KNOW MY THOUGHT ON THE DANGEROUS POWERS WRITTEN IN THE CONSTITUTION AND GIVEN TO THE CONGRESS. I'M SURE YOU MUST ALSO FEEL THE PAIN I HAVE IN MY HEART FOR NOT SIGNING. WHEN I ASKED FOR HELP ON MY PROPOSAL THAT AMENDMENTS TO THE PLAN BE OFFERED BY THE STATE CONVENTIONS, WHICH IT SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO FIRST, AND THEN FINALLY AGREED UPON BY ANOTHER CONVENTION, WAS VOTED DOWN, IT LEFT ME WITH NO ALTERNATIVE. I FEEL THAT ASKING PEOPLE ONLY TO ACCEPT OR REJECT IT AS IT IS NOW WOULD LEAD TO ANARCHY AND CIVIL UNREST. AS THE PLAN NOW IS, I CANNOT SIGN MY NAME TO IT. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT NINE STATES WILL FAIL TO RATIFY THIS PLAN.
Charles Pinckney has kept still as long as he could while listening to Gerry, Mason and Randolph. Now mad, he rises from his seat, and asks for permission to speak.	PINCKNEY	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. PINCKNEY.
	PINCKNEY	I AM OPPOSED TO ANY KIND OF SECOND CONVENTION! NOTHING BUT CONFUSION COULD COME FORTH FROM SUCH AN EXPERIMENT. THE STATES WILL NEVER AGREE IN THEIR PLANS, AND NEITHER WILL THEIR DELEGATES AGREE ON WHAT IS PRESENTED BEFORE THEM. I, SIR, BELIEVE THAT CONVENTIONS ARE SERIOUS THINGS, AND OUGHT NOT TO BE REPEATED. I ALSO HAVE SOME SERIOUS OBJECTIONS TO THE PLAN —FOR EXAMPLE —THE LACK OF A TWO-THIRDS REQUIREMENT FOR NAVIGATION ACTS, AND THE CONTEMPTIBLE WEAKNESS AND DEPENDENCE OF THE EXECUTIVE. HOWEVER, I WILL SUPPORT IT LEST THE ULTIMATE DECISION ON THE FUTURE OF THE REPUBLIC BE MADE BY THE SWORD!

The Convention is stunned by the words of Gerry, Mason and Randolph, and after Pinckney's comments, remain silent. The spotlight slowly fades over the Convention and shines on Madison's spot. He speaks from this spot, and at the same time begins to move back to his Convention seat.		
	MADISON	WE ARE NOW BACK ONCE AGAIN WHERE WE STARTED, AND THAT IS SEPTEMBER 17TH, AND WHILE BRINGING YOU UP-TO-DATE ON THE EVENTS OF THE CONVENTION, THE DELEGATES HAVE AGREED UPON A MOTION ON REPRESENTATION; MOVED THAT THE CONSTITUTION BE AGREED TO BY ALL STATES; AND THAT THE MINUTES OF THE CONVENTION BE GIVEN TO THE PRESIDENT. IT IS NOW PAST THREE O'CLOCK, AND THE DELEGATES ARE ALL READY TO SIGN. GENERAL WASHINGTON IS ABOUT TO SPEAK.
Washington stands.	WASHINGTON	GENTLEMEN, IT APPEARS TO ME A LITTLE SHORT OF MIRACLE, THAT DELEGATES FROM SO MANY STATES, AND DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER IN MANNERS, BACKGROUNDS, AND INTERESTS, SHOULD UNITE IN FORMING A PLAN FOR A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

	WASHINGTON	WE CAN'T EXPECT PERFECTION IN THIS WORLD; BUT WE HAVE MADE SOME PROGRESS IN THE SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT. SHOULD THIS PLAN OFFERED TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA HAVE ANY FAULTS, A CONSTITUTIONAL DOOR IS LEFT OPEN TO MAKE CHANGES. I SUGGEST WE NOW PROCEED TO SIGN. AS THE SECRETARY CALLS YOUR STATE, PLEASE PROCEED TO THE SECRETARY'S DESK.
Washington takes his seat.		
Before the delegates from New Hampshire are called by the Secretary, Dr. Franklin stands with speech in hand and proceeds to read. Wilson is by his side and helps hold him up.	FRANKLIN	MR. PRESIDENT! I'LL ADMIT THERE ARE PARTS OF THIS CONSTITUTION WHICH I DO NOT NOW APPROVE, BUT I AM NOT SURE I SHALL NEVER APPROVE THEM. FOR HAVING LIVED SO LONG, I HAVE EXPERIENCED MANY INSTANCES WHEN GIVEN BETTER INFORMATION, OR FULLER CONSIDERATION, TO CHANGE MY MIND, ON EVEN IMPORTANT ISSUES, WHICH I ONCE THOUGHT WERE RIGHT, BUT LATER FOUND WRONG. THEREFORE, SIR, I AGREE TO THIS CONSTITUTION, WITH ALL ITS FAULTS, IF THERE ARE ANY, BECAUSE I THINK WE NEED A WELL ADMINISTERED GOVERNMENT. I BELIEVE THAT THIS GOVERNMENT IS LIKELY TO BE WELL ADMINISTERED FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, AND THEN WILL END IN DESPOTISM, AS OTHER GOVERNMENTS HAVE DONE WHEN THE PEOPLE HAVE BECOME SO CORRUPT AS TO NEED A DESPOTIC GOVERNMENT. I DOUBT ALSO WHETHER ANY OTHER CONVENTION COULD COME UP WITH A BETTER CONSTITUTION. FOR WHEN YOU CALL TOGETHER A NUMBER OF MEN OF GREAT WISDOM, YOU ALSO GET WITH THOSE MEN ALL THEIR PASSIONS, THEIR ERRORS OF OPINION, THEIR LOCAL INTERESTS AND THEIR SELFISH VIEWS. FROM SUCH A GROUPING, CAN A PERFECT PRODUCTION BE EXPECTED?

	FRANKLIN	IT, THEREFORE, ASTONISHES ME, SIR, TO FIND THIS PLAN APPROACHING SO CLOSE TO PERFECTION, AND I THINK IT WILL ASTONISH OUR ENEMIES, WHO ARE WAITING TO HEAR THAT OUR COUNCILS ARE CONFUSED, LIKE THOSE OF THE BUILDERS OF BABEL; AND THAT OUR STATES ARE ON THE POINT OF SEPARATION, ONLY TO MEET IN THE FUTURE FOR THE PURPOSE OF CUTTING ONE ANOTHER'S THROATS. THUS, I CONSENT, SIR, TO THIS CONSTITUTION, BECAUSE I EXPECT NO BETTER, AND BECAUSE I AM NOT SURE THAT IT IS NOT THE BEST. THE OPINIONS I HAVE HAD OF ITS ERRORS I SACRIFICE TO THE PUBLIC GOOD. I HOPE, THEREFORE, THAT FOR OUR OWN SAKES, AS A PART OF THE PEOPLE, AND FOR THE SAKE OF POSTERITY, WE SHALL ACT HEARTILY AND ALL HERE SIGN THE CONSTITUTION.
	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU, DR. FRANKLIN, FOR YOUR WORDS OF WISDOM. MAJOR JACKSON, WILL YOU CALL FOR THE STATES TO SIGN?
	MORRIS	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. MORRIS.
	MORRIS	SIR! WOULD YOU PLEASE HONOR THE CONVENTION BY BEING THE FIRST TO SIGN THIS HISTORIC DOCUMENT?
Jackson brings the paper over to Washington's table, and places it before him and waits.		

Washington rises from his seat and, holding the pen in his hand, and after a short pause, pronounces the following:	WASHINGTON	SHOULD THE STATES REJECT THIS EXCELLENT CONSTITUTION, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO THE SAME IN PEACE WILL EVER COME AGAIN. THE NEXT—WILL RESULT FROM BLOODSHED!
He then sits down, signs, and Jackson returns to his desk and proceeds to call the states.		
	JACKSON	CONNECTICUT.
The remaining 12 delegates on stage will be assigned several states to act as signatories along with the main characters.		
	JACKSON	MASSACHUSETTS.
	JACKSON	NEW JERSEY.
Delegates sign.		
	JACKSON	NEW YORK.
Mr. Hamilton on rising and going to the table speaks prior to signing.	HAMILTON	SIRS! NO MAN'S IDEAS WERE FARTHER AWAY FROM THIS PLAN THAN MINE. I REALIZE, AS A NATION, WE NEED A STRONG NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

	HAMILTON	THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS CONSTITUTION IN A TIME OF PEACE, AND DONE BY WILLING PEOPLE IS AN EXCITING EVENT, AND ONE WHICH I LOOK FORWARD TO WITH GREAT JOY. IN MY OWN STATE, TO CONVINCE PEOPLE OF ITS WORTH WILL BE A MAJOR TASK, BUT I'M SURE IT CAN BE DONE.
	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU, COLONEL HAMILTON, FOR THOSE ENCOURAGING REMARKS.
Delegates sign.	JACKSON	DELAWARE.
	JACKSON	VIRGINIA.
Madison and John Blair proceed to the table to sign. Randolph and Mason stand by their chairs. Randolph speaks first.	RANDOLPH	GENTLEMEN, I APOLOGIZE AGAIN FOR REFUSING TO SIGN. I DO NOT MEAN BY MY REFUSAL THAT I AM PERSONALLY AGAINST IT. I HAVE WORKED HARD FOR THIS UNION. I BELIEVE AS SURELY AS THERE IS A GOD THAT OUR SAFETY, OUR POLITICAL HAPPINESS, AND EXISTENCE DEPEND ON THE UNION OF OUR STATES. IF UNION IS LOST, I FEAR IT WILL BE LOST FOREVER. I AM STILL AGAINST PARTS OF THIS PLAN, BUT WHEN I LOOK AT THE GOOD OF A UNION, AND THE DREADFUL THOUGHT OF NO UNION AT ALL, WHEN I SEE SAFETY ON MY RIGHT, AND DESTRUCTION ON MY LEFT, WHEN I SEE HAPPINESS GAINED BY THIS WAY, AND CONSTANT FIGHTING BY THE OTHER, AS WE NOW HAVE——I MUST, I MUST MAKE UP MY MIND AS TO WHAT I WILL DO WHEN I GET BACK TO VIRGINIA VERY QUICKLY.

	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU GOVERNOR RANDOLPH. GOD GRANT YOU WISDOM IN YOUR DECISION.
	MASON	I REPEAT, SIR, IT WAS WRONG TO SAY TO THE PEOPLE, TAKE THIS DOCUMENT OR NOTHING! IF OTHER CONVENTIONS WERE HELD IN THE RESPECTIVE STAES AS WAS SUGGESTED, AND VOTED DOWN—-AND IF MY OWN STATES VOTED YEA, THEN AND ONLY THEN COULD I SIGN, FOR I WOULD HAVE BOTH THE BACKING OF MY LEGISLATURE AND OF MY PEOPLE!
Mason and Randolph sit down.		
	JACKSON	SOUTH CAROLINA.
	PINCKNEY	MR. PRESIDENT.
	WASHINGTON	MR. PINCKNEY.
	PINCKNEY	IF THERE WERE MORE SPACE ON THIS PAPER, I WOULD LIKE TO SIGN MY NAME BIGGER THAN THAT OF JOHN HANCOCK'S ON THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.
Laughter from the group. Here! Here! etc.		
	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU, SIR! I BELIEVE THE DELEGATES HAVE SHOWN THEIR APPRECIATION OF YOUR ENTHUSIASM, AS WELL AS TO THANK YOU FOR LEAVING THEM SPACE TO SIGN.
	JACKSON	GEORGIA.
Delegates sign.		

Delegates rise and sign.	JACKSON	NORTH CAROLINA.
Delegates rise and sign.	JACKSON	MARYLAND.
Delegates rise and sign.	JACKSON	NEW HAMPSHIRE.
Delegates rise and sign.	JACKSON	PENNSYLVANIA.
	WILSON	MR. PRESIDENT, MAY I MAKE A STATEMENT BEFORE I SIGN?
	WASHINGTON	YOU MAY.
	WILSON	WE NOW SEE THE GREAT END OF OUR PURPOSE. IT WAS TO DRAW UP A NATIONAL CONSTITUTION FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE TO CONSIDER—A CONSTITUTION THAT WOULD BRING OUT THE GOOD QUALITIES, AND PREVENT THE BAD QUALITIES OF GOVERNMENT—A CONSTITUTION THAT WOULD BE WORKABLE FOR ALL, AND ONE THAT WOULD INSURE PEACE, FREEDOM, AND HAPPINESS TO THE STATES AND THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA. THIS SYSTEM, I BELIEVE, WILL MAKE US A POWERFUL NATION, AND WE SHALL BE CONSIDERED AS SUCH BY EVERY NATION OF THE WORLD. WE SHALL ALSO REGAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF ALL OUR CITIZENS. LET ME OFFER ONE MORE CONSIDERATION, BY ADOPTING THIS PLAN, WE SHALL PROBABLY HELP OTHER PEOPLE SEE FREEDOM AND LIBERTY IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD.
	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU, MR. WILSON.

	JACKSON	GENERAL WASHINGTON, THIRTY-NINE DELEGATES FROM ALL STATES REPRESENTED AT THE CONVENTION HAVE SIGNED THEIR NAMES ON THE DOCUMENT.
	WASHINGTON	THANK YOU, MAJOR JACKSON, AND DELEGATES. THE EVENT IS NOW IN THE HANDS OF GOD! IF THERE IS NO FURTHER BUSINESS, I NOW DECLARE THIS CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE ADJOURNED, SINI DIE, AND SUGGEST WE MEET AT THE CITY TAVERN.
Madison begins to walk slowly to his position on his right of the stage while Morris speaks.		
	MORRIS	AND I EXTEND TO ALL TO BE MY GUEST AND EAT HEARTILY.
Laughter from the group.		
	PINCKNEY	WELL AT LEAST, MR. MORRIS, WE KNOW THAT SOME OF YOUR WEALTH WILL BE DONATED TO A WORTHY CAUSE.
More laughter from the group. As Madison is about to reach his spot, Mr. Franklin calls and shuffles towards him.		
	FRANKLIN	OH MR. MADISON.
	MADISON	YES, DR. FRANKLIN?
	FRANKLIN	DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT?

	MADISON	FOR YOU, SIR, I NOT ONLY HAVE A MINUTE, BUT AM HONORED TO SPEND AS MUCH TIME WITH YOU AS YOU WILL ALLOW ME.
	FRANKLIN	DID YOU NOTICE THE RISING SUN PAINTED ON THE BACK OF GENERAL WASHINGTON'S CHAIR? I WOULD SAY THE PAINTERS HAD A HARD TIME DECIDING WHETHER IT WAS A RISING SUN, OR A SETTING SUN. MANY TIMES DURING THESE SESSIONS, AS VARIOUS ISSUES WERE DISCUSSED, I LOOKED AT THAT CHAIR, NEVER SURE IF IT WERE A RISING OR SETTING SUN. BUT NOW I AM HAPPY TO SAY YES, IT IS A RISING SUN, RATHER THAN A SETTING SUN!
Franklin smiles and he and Madison turn to go off stage, arm in arm.	MADISON	DR. FRANKLIN, AS THE ALMIGHTY HAS AIDED US DURING OUR TIMES OF GREAT NEED IN THE PAST, WE MUST BELIEVE HIS HAND ALSO GUIDED US IN THE WRITING OF THIS CONSTITUTION. GOD HAS TRULY BLESSED THESE—THESE UNITED STATES!
As they slowly walk off stage, the music comes into play, and a voice begins to recite the preamble to the Constitution.		
AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL is played softly while Franklin and Madison walk off the stage, and reaches its greatest volume on the conclusion of the reading of the preamble.	VOICE	"WE, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES, IN ORDER TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION, ESTABLISH JUSTICE, INSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY, PROVIDE FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE, PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE, AND SECURE THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY TO OURSELVES AND OUR POSTERITY, DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS CONSTITUTION FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bowen, Catherine D.
Miracle at Philadelphia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1966.

Bradford, M. E.
A Worthy Company: Brief Lives of the Framers of the United States Constitution. Marlborough, NH: Plymouth Rock Foundation, 1983.

Custis, George T.
History of the Origin, Formation and Adoption of the Constitution, Vol. I & II. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1860.

Elliot, Jonathan, ed.
The Debates of the State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution as Recommended by the General Convention at Philadelphia in 1787. 5 vols. New York: Burt Franklin, 1974.

Farrand, Max
The Framing of the Constitution of the United States. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976.

Farrand, Max, ed.
The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787. 4 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966.

Hamilton, Alexander; Madison, James; and Jay, John
The Federalist Papers. New York: Mentor Books, 1961.

Hanff, Helen
The Signing of the Constitution. New York: Nelson Doubleday, 1961.

Irving, Washington
The Life of George Washington. Vol. I-IV. New York: The Columbian Publishing Co., 1891.

Latham, Earl, ed.
The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1956.

Lossing, Benson
Washington and the American Republic. Vol. III. New York: Virtue and Yorston, N.D.

Morris, Richard B.
The Life History of the United States, "The Making of a Nation." Vol. 2: 1775-1789. Time Incorporated: New York, N.D.

Prescott, Arthur
Drafting the Federal Constitution. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968.

Rossiter, Clinton
1787: The Grand Convention. New York: Macmillan, 1966.

Rossum, Ralph A. and Gary L. McDowell, ed.
The American Founding. Port Washington, New York and London: Kennikat Press, 1981.

Scott, E. H., ed.
Journal of the Federal Constitution as kept by James Madison. Chicago: Albert, Scott & Co., 1893.

Smith, David G.
The Convention and the Constitution. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965.

THE CONSTITUTION: LITTLE SHORT OF MIRACLE

Total Speaking Parts 16
Total on stage 24-30

JAMES MADISON
ROBERT MORRIS
JOHN RUTLEDGE
DR. JOHNSON
JAMES WILSON
GEORGE WASHINGTON
WILLIAM PATERSON
LUTHER MARTIN
CHARLES PINCKNEY
THOMAS MIFFLIN
ALEXANDER HAMILTON
EDMUND RANDOLPH
ELBRIDGE GERRY
GEORGE MASON
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
WILLIAM JACKSON
"A VOICE"

CHARACTER SKETCHES OF THOSE DELEGATES WITH SPEAKING PARTS IN THE ONE-ACT DRAMA
(To Assist in Casting)

James Madison:
About 37 years of age. Easy to get along with and has an agreeable style. Modest, yet people accept his greatness. Profound politician, scholar, but not an orator. Leader of the Convention, best informed of all convention delegates. Twice elected to Congress and always considered one of its ablest, probably the ablest to ever sit. Probably most knowledgeable of any person in the Union on Affairs of the Country.

Robert Morris:
About 50 years old. A merchant of great wealth. Not a scholar as others in attendance, but just as great. Possesses an energetic mind, second to none. Was not a college graduate.

John Rutledge:
About 48 years of age. An orator of note but speaks too fast. A man of ability; member of Congress. Was once Governor of South Carolina. A gentleman of distinction and wealth.

Dr. Johnson:
About 60 years of age. Has nice personality — no temper, has affectionate style of speaking to delegates. Is no orator, and voice tone makes people uncomfortable. Intellectual, and well respected for legal knowledge. Thorough in presenting points of view based on study. Dignified.

James Wilson:
About 45 years old. Very forceful due to reasoning ability, but no great orator. Understands human nature. Knowledgeable of political institutions of the world —past and present and uses this knowledge. Ranks among the best in legal and political knowledge. None more clear, copious or comprehensive.

George Washington:
52 years of age. Strong determined — highly respected, gentleman. Placed by peers above the average man. Does not have to speak to scold a person; only needs to look and the individual gets the message. When speaking, no one else speaks or whispers. Friendly, but still a bit distant (no one calls him George). More a statesman than politician. A physically large individual.

William Paterson:
About 34 years of age. Smallest in size of all the delegates. A person of great modesty, happy, polite. Not an extremist, but did develop an alternate to the Virginia Plan. Excellent orator and speaks only when thoroughly knowledgeable of the debate question. Was praised by all the delegates for his disposition.

Luther Martin:
34 years of age. Well educated, possesses a great amount of information. Actions tend to make people angry. Does not speak well, long winded and at times loses train of thought. Is argumentative, sour, pigheaded. Strong states righter. Favors Confederation rather than Constitution. Left before Convention ended.

Charles Pinckney:
24 years of age, the youngest delegate. Shows great promise, extremely knowledgeable. Very polite and respectful of others. Hard worker, served in Congress. Speaks clearly and meaningfully, not wasting words.

Thomas Mifflin:
40 years of age. Very handsome; General, Continental Army. Served under Washington, and tried to have him removed as Commander-in-Chief. Excellent politician, well informed. Probably most popular political figure in his state at time of the Convention.

Alexander Hamilton:
33 years of age. Served under Washington. Small in size and thin, classy dresser. Stiff in manner; a very proud person. Lacks a strong voice and oratory ability. Thinks things through thoroughly and analytically and when speaks, tries to force points across. Knowledgeable in the field of law.

Edmund Randolph:
32 years of age. Polished gentleman, scholar and statesman, hard worker, Governor of Virginia. Fine voice, good physique, a natural to present the Virginia Plan. Was Washington's aid-de-camp during the war. Did not sign Constitution.

Elbridge Gerry:
37 years of age. Gentleman in all situations, wealthy merchant. Hesitating speaker and at times finds it difficult to put across a specific point, yet is knowledgeable about the subject. Is not afraid to defend a position which may differ from the majority. Negative attitude on points, not in agreement with. Failed to sign the Constitution.

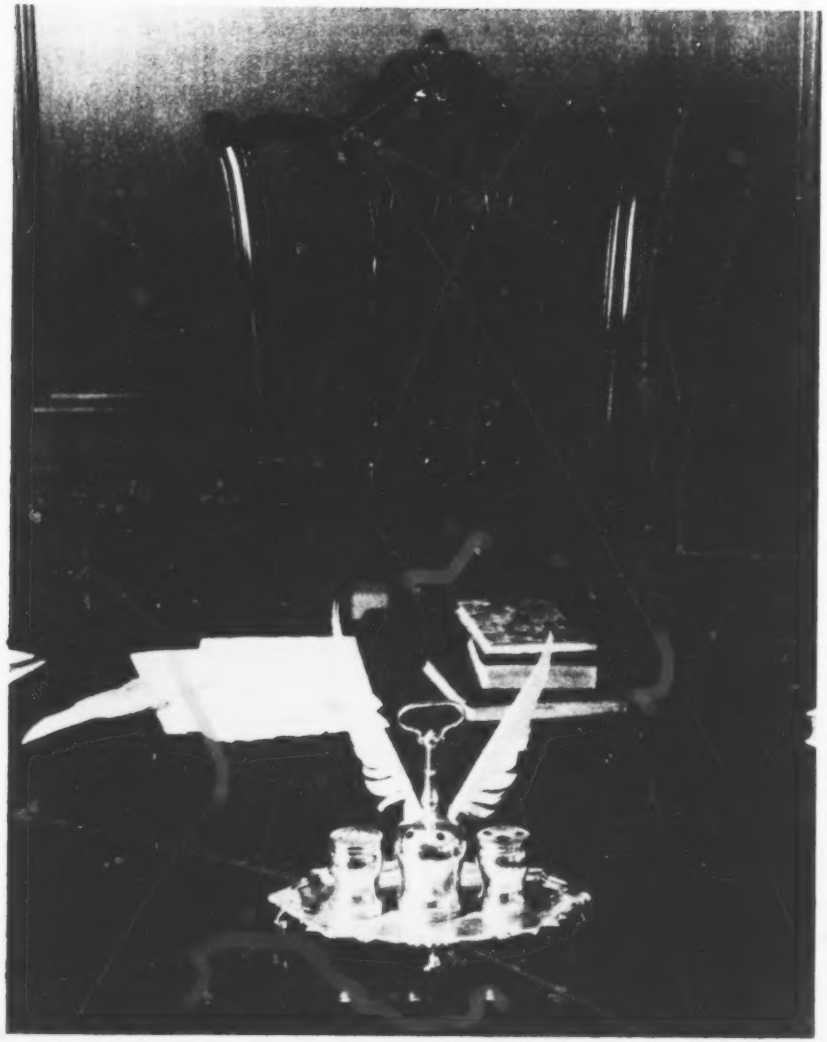
George Mason:
About 60 years old. Speaks with knowledge of experience and accomplishments. Strong in character, able and convincing when debating. Stands behind convictions. Strong advocater for Bill of Rights. Did not sign Constitution.

Benjamin Franklin:
82 years of age. Greatest philosopher of the age; highly respected. Is more of a reducer of tension between points under discussion than contributor. Always has a story to tell to lighten up the situation, also soothed hurt feelings. Probably gave more assistance to delegates during informal chats than during the Convention.

William Jackson:
Officer under Washington. Got position probably because of solicitation for the job. Kept notes, but not to the satisfaction of Madison.

STAGING IDEAS

THE PRESIDENT'S CHAIR

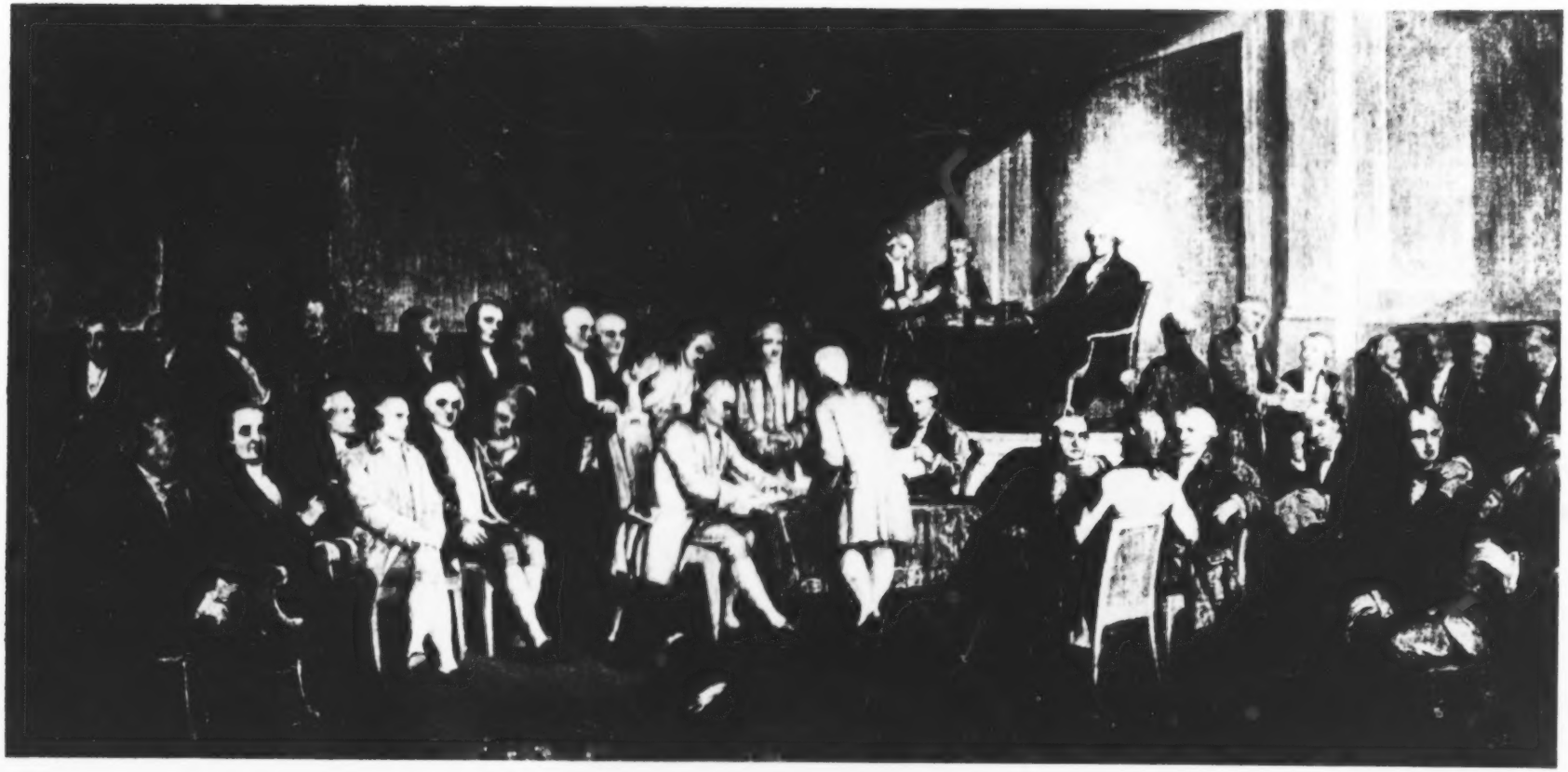


INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK COLLECTION

INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK COLLECTION

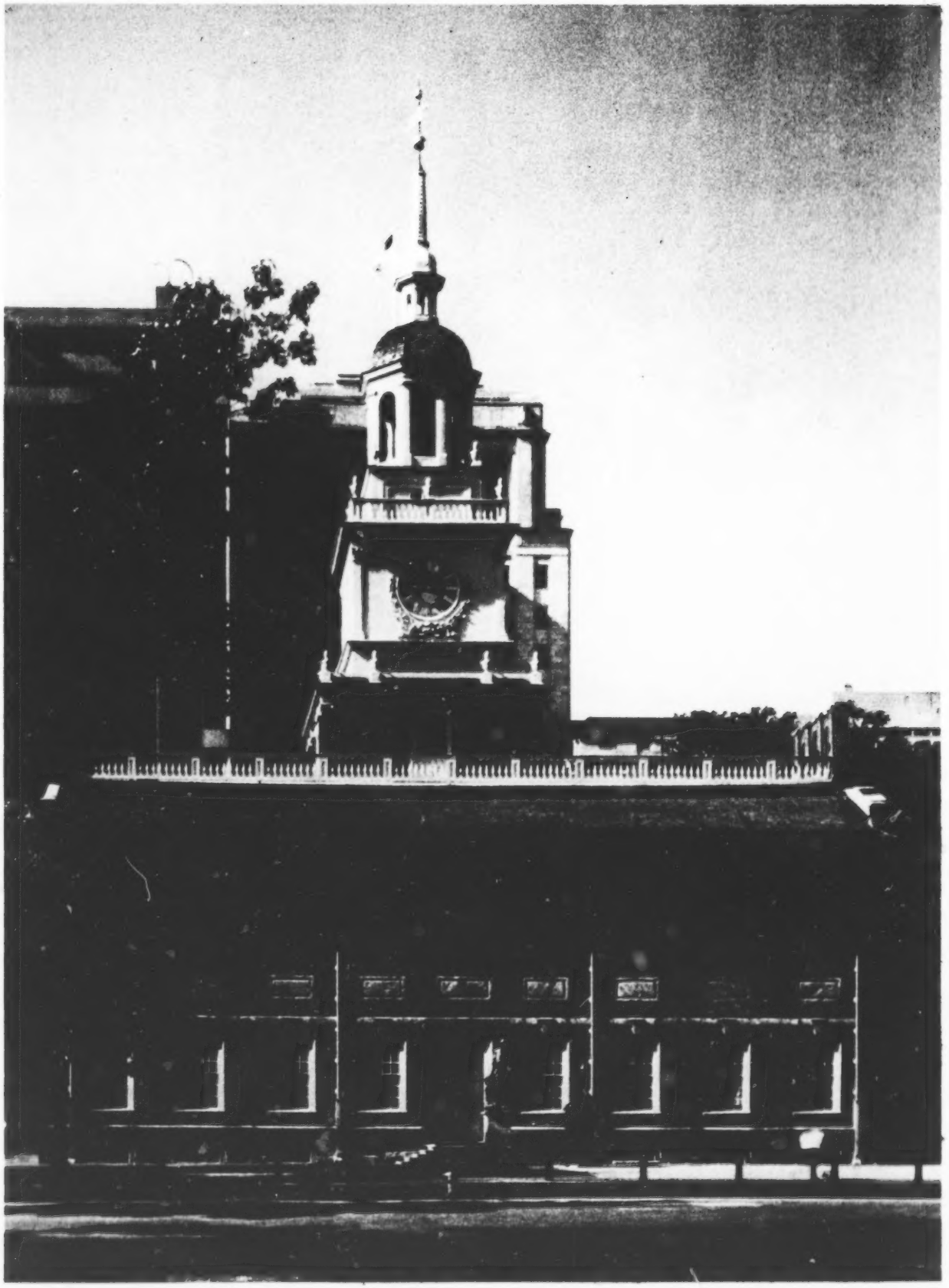
"Dr. Franklin, looking towards the president's chair, at the back of which a rising sun happened to be painted, observed to a few members near him, that painters had found it difficult to distinguish in their art a rising sun from a setting sun. I have, said he, often and often in the course of the session and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fear as to its issue, looked at that behind the president without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting: But now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun."

Madison's Notes, September 17, 1787



INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL
HISTORICAL PARK COLLECTION

A painting depicting the signing of U.S. Constitution in 1787



INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK COLLECTION

Independence Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The American Legion
P. O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206

Pub. No. 30-000